

# MARK TWAIN JOURNAL



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# THE MARK TWAIN JOURNAL

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Cyril Clemens, Editor-in-Chief

Best wishes for continuous achievement in perpetuating Mark Twain's memory.  
—General Omar N. Bradley.

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## My Friend Mark Twain

Helen Keller

The life of Mark Twain is so well known that I doubt if any one can discover anything new to write about him. I can only attempt to put into a little span of words what his friendship meant to me.

I met Mark Twain first at the home of Laurence Hutton when I was fourteen years old, and from that day until his death we were friends. I felt nearest to him during the few days I spent with him in the quiet of Stormfield. Whether we talked or sat by the fire or walked out under the snow-wreathed cedars surrounding the house, I caught unforgettable touch-pictures of his face that never laughed, but was full of tenderness whenever I read his lips.

Mark Twain was the embodiment of a burning soul. His every gesture and word had sparkle, grace and distinction. He gave me a thrill—and a thrill is the most exquisite thing one can give another. I still feel the spell of his exciting personality after fifty years. When his name appears on a page under my hand, a quiver of expectancy runs through me. My fingers dash over the lines eager to read whatever there is about him. I believe it is the intense interest he arouses in everybody that makes us read into his words a depth of philosophy which some of his readers do not find in his writings.

It seemed to me that his pessimism was rather superficial. I thought he enjoyed exercising his wonderful gift of making sardonic aphorisms. Be that as it may, the aphorisms were so incisive, they arrested attention and tended to disperse the mists of smugness that befogged the thinking of his day.

Sometimes he would go on a rampage about religion, declaring that there was no God; no immortality, no essential goodness in the heart of man. Occasionally I ventured to say to him, "You don't mean a word of it. You know man is often a benevolent, happy being, and if we live in a jungle, there are contented, lovely valleys, too." Always there was beneath his ferocious attacks perplexity and perhaps a longing to believe. Under the surface his nature was generous

and loving. No matter how he abused mankind, human beings were dearer to him than all the wealth in the world.

The simplest fact, when his imagination touched it, glowed as full of meaning as a star is freighted with light. Life and living interested him tremendously. He entered into my limited world with enthusiasm just as he might have explored Mars. Blindness was an adventure that kindled his curiosity. He treated me not as a freak but as a handicapped woman seeking a way to circumvent extraordinary difficulties. There was something of divine apprehension in this so rare naturalness towards those who differ from others in external circumstances.

The only homage I can pay such a royal friend is to carry further the battle against darkness and insensibility, and to be thankful for the sweet memories of his kindness that return again and again like song-birds in springtime to delight my heart.

### PLUM-BLOSSOM-LIGHT

Grace Baer Hollowell

If from the edges  
Of the room  
As from the sedges  
Light and love and bloom

Could go, it was to groom  
A willow in the wilderness  
A woman singing  
In the hedges

Not in sorrow, not in joy  
The prescience, the presence  
The plum-tree's sowing  
Petals in exchange for joy

Lightly with a cargo  
Worth all singing  
Silence and Light  
Blessing the hedges

The love and the Woman  
Not traced by song  
Not traced by Woe

## Mark Twain Laughs at Death

Robert J. Lowenherz

Throughout his long literary career, Mark Twain wrote a surprisingly large number of parodies, burlesques, and satires of sentimental obituary eloquence. Neither the sheer quantity of these compositions nor their literary and personal significance to Mark Twain has been appreciated. It is the purpose of this article to examine briefly this aspect of Mark Twain's writing and to call attention to an amusing specimen of his "graveyard humor" that has escaped the notice of students and bibliographers.

One of the earliest of Twain's published writings was a parody of "The Burial of Sir John Moore." It is ironical that "The Burial of Sir Abner Gilstrap," which he published in the *Hannibal Daily Journal* (May 23, 1853), begins

Not a sound was heard, nor a  
funeral note,  
As his carcass through town we  
hurried  
Not e'en an obituary we wrote,  
In respect for the rascal we buried.<sup>1</sup>

Obituaries—a few serious,<sup>2</sup> but chiefly comical ones—were to engage Mark Twain's attention repeatedly in the years that followed.

Of course, Twain's "graveyard humor" was not restricted to satire, parody, or burlesque, as readers familiar with his works well know. The grimly grotesque, the macabre were irresistibly funny to him; and he exploited this comic vein in "The Undertaker's Chat," in "The Invalid's Story," in the ghoulish conversation between the two Yankees haggling over a cemetery plot in "Some Rambling Notes of an Idle Excursion," in "The Art of Inhumation" in *Life on the Mississippi*, and briefly or extensively in virtually every book he wrote. But it is with his satires of the sentimental treatment of death that we are concerned here.

There are at least two sources of this satirical strain in Twain's writing—one literary, the other personal. For over two centuries in England and America, a literary mood of sentimental melancholy had become

increasingly popular.<sup>3</sup> Weltschmerz pervaded prose and poetry alike. From Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, Gray's "Elegy," Young's "Night Thoughts," and Blair's "The Grave;" from the moody gothic novels of Mrs. Radcliffe, "Monk" Lewis, and Charles Brockden Brown; and from the somber poetry and prose of Poe and many of his romantic contemporaries, a literary tradition of fashionable gloom, a sententious treatment of suffering and death, spread everywhere. A reaction was inevitable. It came in the nineteenth century in the writings of those American humorists with whom Mark Twain began his literary apprenticeship: Artemus Ward, Petroleum V. Naseby, John Phoenix, Bill Nye, Orpheus C. Kerr, and Bret Harte. In hearty, swinging burlesques, these men "hit squarely at the worst features of contemporary romantic writing, in behalf of the realism which they practiced and encouraged."<sup>4</sup> Twain's early burlesque "The Burial of Sir Abner Gilstrap" springs from the same disgust with flowery elegies that provoked John Phoenix to write the "Dirge on the Deth of Jeames Hambrick," a preposterous bit of doleful doggerel commencing

it was on June the tenth  
our hearts were very sad  
for it was by an awfull accident  
we lost a fine young lad<sup>5</sup>

Besides the rebellion of American humorists against the genteel tradition of sentimental melancholy, there were Twain's own very intense feelings about death and hypocrisy. All his life he respected the one and despised the other.

He knew death only too well; his childhood was haunted by the violent deaths he had witnessed, and his adult years were made bitter by the deaths of loved ones. In *The Innocents Abroad*, Twain relates the anecdote of his encounter, at the age of eight, with the corpse of a murdered man in the empty, moonlit office of his father, who was Hannibal's justice of the peace. It was also in his father's office, two years

later, that young Sam Clemens watched Sam Smarr, the drunken old man who was shot in the streets of Hannibal, gasp out his life beneath a ponderous bible someone had placed upon his chest. This scene, which gave the boy nightmares long afterward, was destined to reappear years later in *Huckleberry Finn*. A drunken tramp in the Hannibal jail to whom the boy had given some matches was burned to death, and again a childhood nightmare reappears in the person of hapless Muff Potter in *Tom Sawyer*. This accident, Twain recalls in his autobiography, "lay upon my conscience a hundred nights afterward and filled them with hideous dreams . . ."<sup>6</sup>

Most shocking to a sensitive young boy was the terrible memory of the death of his father, Judge Clemens, on March 24, 1847. Dixon Weeter records that the boy had secretly watched the family doctor through a keyhole as he performed a post-mortem on his father's body.<sup>7</sup> Never in his adult life could Mark Twain bring himself to allude directly to this traumatic event. But something of the sick terror of that time is recaptured in the body snatching scene witnessed by Tom and Huck in Chapter IX of *Tom Sawyer*. There were more deaths: Mark Twain's younger brother Henry, who perished in a steamboat accident in 1858; his infant son Langdon, for whose death Twain ruthlessly blamed himself; his daughters Susy and Jean; and his beloved wife Livy. Death, observed Bernard DeVoto, "the images of humors and disgusts of death, the fear of death and the threat of death colored his phantasy from childhood on."<sup>8</sup>

Indeed, Mark Twain had good reason to respect death. Too honest and too scornful of puerile attempts to gloss over the stark reality of death, he could not tolerate the sentimental obituary or the sententious elegy. The man who could write, "Pity is for the living, envy is for the dead" had been touched too often by death during his long life to permit the indulgence of false sentiment. Again and again Twain ridiculed in satire, parody, and burlesque the high-flown funeral eloquence that both amused and exasperated

him.

A. B. Paine records that in 1853, while Mark Twain was in Philadelphia, he "offered his contributions to the Philadelphia *Ledger*—mainly poetry of an obituary kind. Perhaps it was burlesque; he never confessed that, but it seems unlikely that any other obituary poetry would have failed of print."<sup>9</sup> In a speech at the Actors' Fund Fair (1895), Twain recalled, "More than once I have been accused of writing obituary poetry in the Philadelphia *Ledger*. I wish right here to deny that dreadful assertion . . . I did not write that poetry—at least, not all of it."<sup>10</sup> The idea of burlesquing obituary sentiment reappears in a letter (May 7, 1869), from Twain to his bride-to-be Olivia Langdon, in which he facetiously offers to compose an elegiac memoir for a young friend of the family who had died three years earlier.

\*\*\*

I will write it, & I will do it with such grace and such felicity that the ghost of the late William Lord Noyes shall tear its filmy garments with envy & chagrin . . . And I'll have some poetry in—some of those sublime conundrums from Young's Night Thoughts which only Livy can cipher out the meaning of, & some dark & bloody mystery out of the Widow Browning—and also some poetry of my own composition—and between the three I guess we'll "hive" the gentle reader . . .

There you are . . . When I get up memoirs I make the deceased get up too—at least turn over.<sup>11</sup>

\*\*\*

In "Post-Mortem Poetry" (1870), Twain opened the floodgates of funereal gush with fairly amusing results. Five years later he returned to the attack on the "graveyard school" of poetry and prose in his description, in Chapter XXI of *Tom Sawyer*, of the school commencement exercises with their "nursed and petted melancholy." As late as 1902 he was still pricking the inflated obituary, as his droll article entitled "Amend-ed Obituaries" shows.<sup>12</sup>

Certainly the most successful of Mark Twain's attempts to lampoon the sentimental

obituary is his creation of the character of Emmeline Grangerford in *Huckleberry Finn*. This morbid young lady, who had died several years before Huck visits the Grangerfords, "kept a scrap-book when she was alive, and used to paste obituaries and accidents and cases of patient suffering in it out of the *Presbyterian Observer*, and write poetry after them out of her own head."<sup>13</sup> The full-length portrait of Emmeline, complete with a sample of her elegiac art called "Ode to Stephen Dowling Bots, Dec'd," is familiar to every reader of the novel. What readers of *Huckleberry Finn* have missed, however, is the hitherto uncollected essay in which Mark Twain "warmed up" for his bout with Emmeline Grangerford.

He had written the essay in the Spring of 1880, when he was returning to the long-neglected manuscript of *Huckleberry Finn*; and he sent it to his friend W. D. Howells, who was just terminating his editorship of the *Atlantic Monthly*. Either Howells or his successor, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, published the article anonymously, as was the custom, in the "Contributors' Club" of the *Atlantic Monthly* for November, 1884.<sup>14</sup> The absurd mixture of lugubrious obituary eloquence and satirical commentary follows in its entirety.

\* \* \*

He is gone. Yes, he is gone, but we have his obituary. He lived out toward the rear of a Western State, and there he also died. That is enough about him—let us wave him aside; our fight is with his obituary. I think it contains rhetorical blemishes. Thus it begins:

"While yet on the threshold of animated strife, and no unkind visions confronted him on life's journey, overtaken by the still voice of the tomb, he responded by enlisting in the great army of the unreturning past."

I do not think these ingredients are mixed properly.

If there was a fight, and the fight was in the house, "threshold" goes passably well with "animated strife," but not otherwise. But I do not think there was a fight, at that time; he did not "enlist" until later, when he was on a journey and was overtaken by

the still voice of the tomb. His mistake lay in "responding;" he could have let on that he did not hear, since it was a still voice.

"While yet the spring-time of youth blossomed on his locks, the cold touch of an untimely frost fell upon and nipped a life which was yet in bloom."

Now you see, there was no fight, after all; he froze to death.

"But thus it is; when the lamp of life shines brightest, its extinguishment produces thickest darkness."

He had his lantern with him; therefore he could have been nothing but a scout, sent out to hunt up the enemy. I think it possible that there was no fight.

"Life, at best, is but an exiled wandering pilgrim on a desert island, surrounded by the boundless and merciless sea of eternity, on whose barren coast inevitable death awaits on every side its victim unawares."

Starved to death on an island, and probably drowned, into the bargain, — "unawares." Life is full of troubles.

"Ere yet the fruits of manhood's laurel had ripened on his brow, he laid himself to rest in communion with the dead."

There is no reasonable fault to be found with his not waiting for the crop; for even if the laurel yielded a berry—which it does not—it would not ripen on a person's brow.

"Ere yet the shadows of disappointed hope darkened the horizon of a dawning future, he reclined on his lowly couch to mingle with the cold and forgotten dust."

I do not like this. A person does not travel with a couch and a lantern, too, in such a place as that. And why "cold" dust. Is the warm kind preferable? And did this man lie down and cover up and peter out in the natural way, after all? There are many perplexing difficulties about this history.

"During many long years, with that filial affection which makes a child loved by its parents, and respected by its neighbors, he has proven a husband, father, son and brother."

Filial affection does not "prove" anything. The official records of the county will show whether he was a father, mother, (Continued on opposite page)



# *I Remember Mark Twain*

M. Lovina Cooper

It was during Chapel exercises, University of Minnesota, that I saw him, heard him, listened well-nigh reverently to the great Mark Twain. What he said, his subject, I have forgotten. Not because his talk lacked anything, have I forgotten, but because so much water has gone under the bridge (and at times the bridge with it—almost. At such times memory gets blurred).

What he said was important, and interesting, of course; Samuel Clemens would do no less. Had he not been of that caliber, President Northrup would not have granted us the opportunity of hearing him. A great man, as was President Northrup, welcomes other greats, so we students had the chance of a lifetime. We listened with wrapped attention while the famous Mark Twain talked.

No, I can't tell you what he said. What he was—that I remember; the magnetic man, vigorous, poised, yet with quiet simplicity, the dignity of one who stands again on his feet after Trouble has slapped him down.

His shock of beautiful gray hair I remember, standing up defiant of brush, and that

brother, and sister, or not, but filial affection is no sufficient evidence of mere abstract pretensions like these.

"For his folks he lived."

That is all right—let that pass; the object of this inquiry is what he died for—that and which thing it was that killed him the most.

"But now that the thunderbolt of heaven has fallen upon the hearth-stone of their family circle—"

Why, good land, he was struck by lightning. Take it all around, this is one of the most checkered death-beds that has ever come under my observation. Destroyed in fight, frost-bitten, starved, drowned, squelched in the tranquil couch, splintered by bolts of lightning!—it is little wonder that he faded from our view.

"It may not, perchance, have been given

unforgettable mustache, long and thick, bristling in perfect accord with his hair.

His smile I recall quite clearly. That smile, and the twinkle in his eye, made him one of us. We loved him. Of course he must have joked a bit—without fun he wouldn't have been Mark Twain—but it wasn't only when he joked that he smiled; good nature glowed, personality vibrated, every moment he was on the platform.

Even the color of his suit I recall correctly, I think; soft gray, and there may have been a small stripe. It fitted loosely on his fairly stout frame. No Beau Brummel, our Samuel Clemens—but what a man! You wouldn't forget him, once you had seen him. You would remember the jolly pleasantness of him, along with the roundness of face, and the strong character lines. You would remember the man who wrote, and kept writing, to pay off unjust debts, who put on paper the immortal Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn, and the others, for the world to laugh at, and love.

But the man himself, who gave the world light-hearted happiness—Mark Twain—neither you nor I could ever forget.

him to climb the dizzy heights of statesmanship, where Bacon and Burke were so often heard, or fathom deeply the bosom of science, where Huxley and Tyndall stroll with familiar step."

The nautical phrase is misplaced there; one does not fathom a bosom. Neither do any out the most reckless people go tramping around in such a place.

"But he is gone; he sleeps his long, last sleep, unconscious of the night winds that chant the requiem o'er his grave, or the vesper breezes that play among the lonesome pine, making music as though each bough played the strings of Apollo's golden harp."

Very well, that is all square and right. And all to his advantage, too—but he missed his obituary.

(Footnotes on page 16)

## *Saint Peter and the Humorist*

Laurence Pratt

Up the golden stairway—it seemed  
an endless climb—  
Mark was rising step to step  
with quips to pass the time;  
While clambering behind him, in stride or  
leaping jog,  
Were freckled boy, a king and duke, a bump-  
ing, jumping frog,  
An Indian with a bottle, a Roman guide  
in tears,  
A Yankee dressed in armor like a knight of  
other years.

When they had reached the heavens, Mark  
thrust his long arm out  
To catch a cloud for hiding them by winding  
it about,  
Then innocently hammered upon the golden  
door.

Saint Peter peered at his mustache and  
checked the clothes he wore.  
He read Mark's long credentials about his  
honest labor  
Declaring that his books had given pleasure  
to his neighbor.

Saint Peter, quite persuaded, announced,  
"This record's fine.  
Come in and let me shut the door—and here's  
the book to sign."  
Mark bumped the great door slyly, to swing  
it open wide,  
Then motioned for his group to slither steal-  
thily inside.  
"Great rainbows!" Peter shouted. "Pink  
feathers! Holy hate!  
What's all this earthly rubbish doing here  
at Heaven's gate?"

But Mark was always loyal. He stood beside  
the band  
Declaring he would fall with them unless  
they all could stand.  
"These are my children, Peter. They are a  
part of me.  
You surely wouldn't separate us for eter-  
nity."  
Saint Peter turned the pages of his huge  
register.  
He said, "Not one is listed here. Now, va-  
mose! travel! stir!"

The argument was lengthy, but disagree-  
ment stood:

Mark wouldn't go through gate or door  
unless the others could.

Saint Peter blew and blustered. He scowled,  
and scratched his head.

His records showed these persons weren't  
listed with the dead;

Therefore they weren't fitted for either  
Heaven or Hell,

And Purgatory didn't seem the place for  
them to dwell.

As Peter's thoughts grew clearer, in calmer  
mood he said,

"Mark Twain, your tasks are finished so it's  
time that you were dead.

But these whom you created have work on  
Earth to do.

Why, it may be a thousand years before  
their stint is through.

So say goodbye and leave them. Approach the  
heavenly throng

While they remain to give delight on Earth  
where they belong."

Mark answered, "You've convinced me. If  
credit is permitted,

I'll buy a robe and harp, and have a golden  
halo fitted;

My funeral cost so much, I haven't any  
cash.

I'll need wing feathers, too, that harmonize  
with my mustache."

To Twain's companions, Peter remarked,  
with kindly looks,

"You'll do your job most readily immured  
in sprightly books."

They left, to take their places, attired in  
verbs and nouns,

On shelves of countless libraries enriching  
endless towns.

There they remain, contented—Mark Twain's  
delightful crew:

Drunk Injun Joe; the Jumping Frog that  
old Jim Smiley knew;

The Yankee dressed in armor; sly Huckle-  
berry Finn;

The King, the Duke; the Roman Guide—  
securely printed in.

## *The Man Who Could Never Die*

By Edward Dieckmann, Jr.

On a Sunday evening in May, 1948, Dr. W. C. Shipley knocked on the door of a cabin high in the Sonoma Mountains north of San Francisco. He had come all the way from Santa Rosa, driving as quickly as the roads of the valley would let him. For the man who lived in this cabin had been hard hit by a series of strokes and was under his care. This evening, just as the doctor sat down to dinner, George Thompson, owner of the ranch on which the cabin stood, had called on the phone, urgency in his voice. "Quick, Doc! Martin's unconscious. Looks like another stroke."

When the door opened, spilling a pool of light out into the night, George Thompson was there, his kind face strained with waiting.

"Come in, Doc, come in!" He held the door wide and Doctor Shipley went past him and across the room to where the man lay on the bed.

"How long has he been like this?" the Doctor called over his shoulder.

"I don't know, Doc," Thompson said. "I came up to see how he was and there he'd fallen, right on the floor."

Dr. Shipley bent over the bed, one hand loosening the old man's clothing, the other pressing a stethoscope to his chest. For a moment all was silent, but for the breathing of the sick man and the chatter of night-birds in the trees outside. Then he straightened. "You'd better call an ambulance, George. I can't do anything for him here."

"Already have," Thompson said. "I thought it was best to have one on the way, just in case."

"A good thing you did," the doctor said. "I'm afraid he's had it this time."

"You don't think he'll live, Doc?" Again that note of urgency was in Thompson's voice, something that would have seemed strange to an outsider who knew only that the old man on the bed was Thompson's woodcutter and handyman.

"Frankly, he hasn't a chance," Dr. Shipley said.

Thompson looked around the tiny cabin. "Poor Martin. Dying here so far from home."

"No relatives in this country?" the doctor asked. "That's strange for a man of 77."

"He used to speak of a brother and sister in Minnesota," the other said. "But they went back to Sweden. Maybe they're still alive."

"Well, I'll need some information, George. Something for my report." The doctor took out a notebook and pencil. "What do you know about him? Where he came from, what he did and so on?"

"He never said much," Thompson said. "I don't imagine he told me much more than he told Jack. Jack used to call Martin 'the tame one' because he was so peaceful and different from the Swedes he'd met at sea."

Thompson frowned, trying to stir the ghosts of memory.

"He told me once his name was 'Norrlan-ningen.' Said he worked in the iron mines in Sweden before he came to America, 'bout 1890. He was an odd one, kept to himself. Never learned to read and write. Never did at all."

"Did he work for you all the time?"

"Oh, no. He was sort of a general handy-man of the valley. Only time people ever saw him was during the harvest, fruit picking, chopping wood, mending fences. Last year or so he's been working for me."

Suddenly Thompson stopped. "Say, Doc, we're talkin' like Mart was already dead. It don't seem right."

"I know," said the doctor. "I know how you feel."

"It's not like he was just another handy-man, Doc. Why, all of us called him the 'Peculiar One' but that didn't really fit him. Though now that I come to think of it, Doc, it is peculiar nowadays to know a man who lives alone—and is always there to help his neighbor."

They were both silent for a moment and the doctor thought: *Where is that ambu-*

*lance? Why, oh, why do they have to take so long?*

And Thompson thought: *He's dying, a good man, he's dying. And all alone. In a few years no one will ever know he lived here.*

Then the banshee wail of the siren came to them from down the valley and the doctor smiled. "Maybe—maybe if we get him to the hospital soon enough he'll have a chance." He put his hand on the rancher's shoulder. "I'll need your help now. Let's get him ready."

\* \* \*

After they had gone, the young ambulance attendants, efficient and careful, Dr. Shipley waved once and followed them in his car down the road and through the trees. For a minute George Thompson stood there, listening to the siren fade away among the echoes. Then he went back into the cabin. He would have locked up—if there had been a lock on the door. Old Martin had always trusted his neighbors. Especially had he trusted Jack, dead these many years.

Suddenly something across the room caught Thompson's eye and he went to the bed and stooped over. With a single motion he pulled the wooden box from under the bed. Dust covered, laced with cobwebs, it was filled to the brim with dried camomile blossoms, and Thompson remembered that this was one of the old-country customs that clung to Martin the whole of his life.

"Flowers for my tea," he remembered Martin telling him once.

And then George Thompson remembered something else. With one hand he felt down through the flowers and took the book from the grave it had lain in for such a long time.

It was an old book, the cover stained, the pages dog-eared. But the title on the cover, in large letters, was the name of the very man who had just been taken from the cabin he had lived in for more than 30 years.

And Thompson knew then that this man's name and memory would never die. For it was Martin's friend, Jack, who had asked "The Tame One" for legal permission to use his name for both the title and chief character of one of the most famous of

Jack's novels. A novel that, telling of Jack's own struggles to become a writer, was to inspire an entire generation of American authors.

Thompson lifted the cover of the book and as he did, lifted away the years. For inside, in a bold scrawl across the title page, were the words, "To Norrlanningen Martin Eden—from his friend, Jack London."

"No," George Thompson said softly and his voice filled the room of the cabin. "*Martin Eden* will never die!"

(Footnotes on page 16)

## A DUTCH ADMIRER MEETS MARK TWAIN

Leeuwen Boomkamp

In the summer of 1900 I landed in the States; I was just twenty-one years old. For recreation I often took a Fifth Avenue bus, going from 59th Street to Grant's Tomb, and returning over the same route.

I was riding on the top and there was only one other passenger there that morning, sittin' gin the same aisle.

During the ride I was reading *Tom Sawyer* and could not help chuckling about the clever way he got out of the job of white-washing the fence and letting his friends do the work as a favor.

The kind looking gentleman dressed in a white suit, who sat next to me asked:

"What are you reading that is so funny to you?"

I told him and he said:

"That's is kid's stuff."

I contradicted him and claimed that several of my new friends had recommended the book as the cleverest and wittiest book they knew. We had quite a pleasant argument, pro and contra, when it dawned on me, that I had seen a picture of his gentleman in the paper and attention was called to the fact that he always wore a *white suit* when the weather allowed.

When we came back to 59th Street, I had to get off and on passing towards the steps I said:

"Goodbye, Mr. Clemens."

He shook laughingly his fist at me and said: "You scoundrel!"



## Chaplin and Cantinflas

By Ismael Diego Perez\*

Bergson, the philosopher, assures in his book "*Laughter*" that dramas have proper names, and comedies, common nouns. To this I give the following explanation: every proper name is a desire to put a man into a hierarchy, translate him into a system of ideas that explain us his own passions; and the common noun means to count one self within everything that is human, the hierarchies and values of which are not explainable, and so we feel ourselves defined by the character in the comedy. When in a comedy a miser, a chestnut-seller, a drunkard, or a saint appear, the onlooker thinks he finds, in a greater or lesser degree, the voice that describes his own innermost feelings. Whereas when it comes to drama or tragedy, Medea, Coriolanus or Julius Caesar, we look at them as summits inaccessible to our common feeling or just ordinary mortals: we admire and explain them intellectually, but their passions do not fuse with ours.

It is in there two concepts that I find the difference between Cantinflas, who is the ordinary human type, or the comedy, and Chaplin, the Chaplin of today, who has been overgrow by the change in taste, and who tries to make up for it with intellectual talent and stage tricks.

Cantinflas and Chaplin concur in being individual geniuses. Players that work in couples, like Oliver and Hardy, Harold and Pollard, etc., are ingenious actors, but not geniuses. There are fundamental differences between Chaplin and Cantinflas: the former represents the European genius that has been ripened in intellectual concepts, and the latter expresses the Spanish-American sense or that of the magical races that show themselves by act of living or intuition, in a not to be of logical clarity. The English player being poor, aspires to be a gentleman: there is him a kind of lurking desire to come out of his environment of poverty and become somebody; the player is dressed as a beggar but with gentleman clothes, with a lot of airs, betraying his condition of a gentleman come down in the world. In the other hand, Cantinflas dresses always as a "pelado" (rogue)

\*The author's Spanish idioms have been retained.

without wish to change his social standing, and if by accident he becomes a gentleman he always behaves as a "pelado" even though a "pelado" with the spirit of a gentleman.

Cantinflas has overbrimmed or overgrown Chaplin's conceptual schemes, substituting with the want of reason of the absurd Chaplin's concept of a well grounded sense of humour.

Technical direction, plots and scenes in Chaplin's films are planned in advance; Chaplin studies thoroughly the character and behaves in this ideas and attitudes with a logical subsequence. With Cantinflas plot and direction are not taken into account: while playing the part he is making up from his own inspiration the gesture, the unravelling of the plot, or the convenient attitude, with a creating activity very personal. One would say that from the magical depths of his race springs in him the intuition of what is best.

Cantinflas has always a great pity and indulgence for everything human. In Chaplin there is always rancour that comes from his needy childhood. Cantinflas is the "pelado" who lives happy in the social class into which he was born. Chaplin attacks bourgeois, while Cantinflas thinks that to own things like the bourgeois, is to stop being happy without having anything.

Chaplin has made the whole world laugh: Cantinflas has made laugh Mexicans, Spaniards and Spanish American peoples; but Chaplin represents a world that is gone. If people laugh it is because they are under the influence of many years of prestige, and custom creates mental habits of thinking: in truth, Chaplin's art pleases, nowadays, sophisticated, intellectual people, who see in Chaplin's old art their own physical or moral decay, or the memory of some young stimulus that died away and they pretend it is still alive.

Cantinflas art, that was liked by the Spanish Americans, nowadays is liked by everybody, as it has been proved with the film "*Around the World in 80 Days*", produced in the U.S.A.

The magical tide ascends through history,

and the countries of America that were born from the Spanish roots with new and special characteristics, and others, that are in a period of transition towards a magical stage, will meet Cantinflas' wit. The continental bond of good-fellowship with the U.S.A., leading country and director of the actual work help South American countries in this spiritual development.

Several young American generations and all the world, are waiting for the humoristic expression of these times and Cantinflas is the one called to fulfill this post.

At the end of historical sign, the irony of the past springs as a necessity to free one self from the shadows still lingering in the consciences; it is the birth of a new youth that ascertains itself, criticizing the foregoing generations, because the world is a constant renovation of taste and sensibility. And Chaplin was the genius of humour and irony, who heralded the new times and gave it expression making several generations of children and youngsters laugh.

Let us remember the brutal collision between the fat, violent man, with a long mustache and in an old-fashioned coat with big flaps, or the gentleman who, so full and proud of his traditions, does not understand the pironeting of that buffon who does not give two pins for the well established ways; it is a collision of contrasts between the old and the new generation that to the old man, is unacceptable and absurd.

It is true that Chaplin makes his patures in the American continent. North America is the setting or the most favorable circumstance for the development of the film industry because movies are the XX Century is American. Europe has remained more fixed in its past than America, and Europe remains loyal in its intellectual interpretation of what she was lived during the last forty years, although the new generation that has come out of the last war the one before, has adopted in a great part the sporting and dynamic spirit of cinemadict Americans.

The European writers, living in Europe or America, are those who write about Chaplin. At least I do not know any writer,

American by birth, who had written any interesting book on this outstanding European comic actor.

Let the dead bury their dead, although in Chaplin's case it is the death of an artist of genius whom we value for what he was without considering his present acting. His gestures, his mimicry, his message, his contrasting of characters, his very dexterous trick as a clown's hold the same strong content that always did. But characters of such cruelty as Verdue, or such bitterness as the buffon Caverro, cannot happen specially in America, because of the many opportunities open to all; we all are characters or we could be them. At the utmost, if there is one Verdou, he is some unhinged boy who murders, or kills himself because of jealousy, and it seems incomprehensible to all of us his doing so. Or it is the clown who has wanted to find opportunities, and actually did, though without ever entering his head that as an old man he would have to do what he did not do as a young one.

#### CANTINFLAS IS A CREATOR OF A THEORY OF THE ABSURD

The spirit of these times sets a new faith by the ruling of the absurd. Cantinflas has lifted to the rank of art absurdity. A North American magazine begged for the need of absurdity in art and literature.

Cantinflas's humor brings us laughter and heals us from ill feelings; we are expurgated of ugliness and unhappiness in a spontaneous bloom of the best feelings of the subconscious.

The masses have been liberated from the old order. One could note those lines from Espronceda in "The Devil World":

"Oh, how order tires: There is not madness such as that of the severe logician!"

This is the humoristic doctrine that Cantinflas interprets in his art: to say yes when is not, and to say no when is yes, and no and yes are the two faces of one and the same doctrine: that of the absurd.

Watch out for Cantinflas as the new genius of the comic in America and the world.

# *The Uniqueness of Marietta Holley*

Ellis Parker Butler\*

Marietta Holley—"Josiah Allen's Wife"—created for herself a place in American humor unlike that occupied by any writer of honor in America before or since. Literally hundreds of thousands enjoyed her writings who could see nothing funny in Bill Nye, or any of the other professional humorists, not even Mark Twain. Hundreds of thousands took her to their hearts because they felt she was basing her humor soundly on a belief in temperance, woman's rights and the homely virtues, while other humorists were merely trying to be funny.

"Josiah Allen's Wife" was never a literary man's humorist, as Aldrich was and Mark Twain became in time. She was the common person's writer and was loved by farm folks, those in small towns, and in general by those who delighted in church suppers and bazaars. Here "pieces" were recited or read on innumerable occasions, along with those of her one-time friend, Will Carleton. All these kindly and simple folk knew personally some Josiah Allen, some some Samantha, or some Sweet Cicely.

I do not think it can be doubted that Marietta Holley had—although she may not have consciously known it—a keen sense of the practical application of humor to situation and of the use of the popular topics of the day to interest her readers. For her immense audience she was indebted, as were other writers of her day, to the prevalent system of selling books by agent. She wrote in the hey-day of book-agenting when thousands of men and women were going from house to house all over the country, almost forcing people to buy books. It was this system that created such great sales for General Grant's Memoirs, Mark Twain's books, and so on, and Miss Holley's books were particularly good material. The agents spread her works over all the United States.

At present her books are seldom found except in collections of humor or in some homes where they are still preserved. Vast numbers of her books undoubtedly have been "pulped," for she wrote during the worst

\*Written several years before author's death in 1937.

period of book-making, her chunky volumes flimsily stitched and soon read to pieces.

All in all Miss Holley must be recognized as a "popular American humorist," for such she was and moreover, she was a person worthy of our sincere respect—living sanely in a small up-state New York village, writing industriously for many years, never too impressed by her own importance, accumulating a competence, and always gentle and kind.

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## BALADE OF HUCK FINN

Charles J. Jacobs

I reveled in great Homer's powers  
Until I heard Sam Clemens speak,  
But then I left the Trojan towers  
And fished for catfish up a creek;  
The golden sunshine gleamed before us,  
The dappled shadows dreamed abaft,  
And by-and-by I hummed in chorus  
With Huck and Jim aboard the raft.

And dragonflies on water-flowers  
And minnows playing hide-and-seek  
Filled drowsy days and lazy hours  
One glorious unforgotten week;  
No Tyrian purple tented o'er us,  
It wasn't nectar that we quaffed,  
But what a chef was cooking for us  
Those days with Huck aboard the raft!

With lynching mobs and thundershowers  
And shooting-feuds and rascals sleek,  
I might have been the sort that cowers  
But Huck had spunk and lots of cheek;  
The folks we met could not ignore us—  
Sometimes we ran and sometimes laughed,  
But it was not a life to bore us,  
Huck, Jim, and me aboard the raft.

### *Envoy*

We've gone so stale our friends abhor us;  
Birthdays and business have us gaffed;  
Magician Clemens, now restore us—  
Show us Huck Finn aboard the raft.

## Mark Twain on Bret Harte

George Peirce Clark

Mark Twain's sulphurous comments on Bret Harte in *Mark Twain Eruption*<sup>1</sup> leave no room for doubt regarding his considered opinion of his erstwhile friend. To this evidence, however, one may add, for their savor, certain extensive comments which Mark Twain made about Harte in letters to William Dean Howells. One of these letters has been published by Bernard DeVoto<sup>2</sup>; two others, one pungent, the other almost mellow, are to be found in the same manuscript collection which Mr. DeVoto drew upon<sup>3</sup>.

The first of these offers more specific literary criticism of Harte than is to be found in *Mark Twain in Eruption*, and in its passionate tone is in striking contrast with the temperate marginalia which Mark Twain had earlier written in his copy of *The Luck of Roaring Camp, and Other Sketches* (1870)<sup>4</sup>.

Mark Twain is apparently not aware that Howells had had a part in procuring for Harte the post as American Consul in Crefeld. "Personally," Howells wrote, in answer to an inquiry from President Hayes, "I should be glad of his appointment, and I should have great hopes for him—and fears. It would be easy to recall him, if he misbehaved, and a hint of such a fate would be useful to him."<sup>5</sup>

In the second letter Mark Twain alludes to Howells's poem "Sorrow, my Sorrow," which appeared in *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, CVIII, 147 (Dec., 1903), and to his extensive comments on Harte in the "Editor's Easy Chair" in the same issue (pp. 153-159).

Neither of these letters is printed in full, but nothing pertaining to Harte is omitted from them.

Hotel Normandy  
7 rue de l'Echelle  
Paris, Apl. 15. (1879)

Dear Howells—7. P.M.

(The letter was written at intervals. First two paragraphs omitted).

It was splendid in the President to appoint Mr. (Andrew Dickson) White. The more I think of the matter the more I am satisfied that the President never appointed Bret

Harte. (Secretary of State, William A.) Evarts simply *crowded* that shameless scoundrel in. You have seen by the papers that Harte has deliberately swindled two German publishing houses, by selling each the *sole* right to print one of his books. Poor (Hjalmar Hjorth) Boyesen is here in this expensive city, & has got to *stay* here till his wife is confined in July, & every cent of silver is worth its weight in gold to him; well, two German publishers were going to buy some of his literature, but all of a sudden comes a letter from a famous German author a week or so ago, frightened with disappointment—the publishers have reconsidered the matter, & say in plain terms that they must decline to buy anything of an American author, now, *unless he will give bond to indemnify them in case he has sold the sole right to some other German publisher!* It comes hard on Boyesen. We like Boyesen & his wife, heartily. Poor fellow, there are 12 Orions in his family. That's enough to make anybody warm to him.

Do you know, I wanted to take that German auditor's letter & send it to the President & say "When your Excellency found that George Butler was drunk, on his way to his new post, you dismissed him before he got there; here is a new appointee who is also a drunkard, & is a thief besides: is it not a case for dismissal?"—But I couldn't seem to word a formal state paper just right in my mind, & I wouldn't send one that wasn't in every way a proper thing for the head of our country to read—so I've dropped it for the present. I told Bret Harte, just before the Presidential election, that the New York Custom house was the right place for him, & that I thought him an unfit person for our foreign service. I would think so yet, only the Custom house has lately become too clean a place for such a dirty-bird as he is.

(Over this page is written vertically):

Good night, my boy—  
Yrs Ever,  
Mark

(Mark Twain adds "Continued").



Chatto sent me Harte's new book of Sketches, the other day, ("An Heiress of Red Dog," etc.)<sup>6</sup>. I have read it twice—the first time through tears of rage over the fellow's inborn hypocrisy & snobbishness, his apprentice-art, his artificialities, his mannerisms, his pet phrases, (such as the frequent "I regret to say,")—his laboriously acquired ignorance, & his jejune anxiety to display it. O my God! He rings in *Strasse* when street would answer every purpose, and *Bahnhof* when it carries no sharper significance to the reader than "station" would; he peppers in his seven little French words (you can find them in all his sketches, for he learned them in California 14 years ago,)—he begins his German substantives with "lower case" generally, & sometimes misspells them—all this with a dictionary at his very elbow—what an illustration of his slovenly laziness it is! And Jack Hamlin talks like a Bowery gutter-snipe on one page, & like a courtier of Louis XV's time on the very next one. And he has a "nigger" who talks a "dialect" which is utterly original. The struggle after the pathetic is more pathetic than the pathos itself; if he were to write about an Orphan Princess who lost a Peanut he would feel obliged to try to make somebody snuffle over it.

The second time I read the book I saw a most decided brightness on every page of it—& here & there evidences of genius. I saw enough to make me think, "Well, if this slovenly shoemaker—work is able to command the applause of three or four nations, what *mightn't* this ass accomplish if he would do his work honestly & with pains?" If I ever get my tedious book<sup>7</sup> finished, I mean to weed out some of my prejudices & write an article on "Bret Harte as an Artist"—& print it if it will not be unfair to print it without signature.

(Written along the margin of the above is:)

P.S. If I should think of anything more to say about Harte, I will telegraph.

(Three paragraphs omitted at close.)

Yrs. Ever

Mark

II  
Villa di Quarto  
Castello

Florence, Dec. 4/03.

Dear Howells:

The Xmas No. is fine, & a worthy place for your moving & beautiful poem. How many it comes home to; how many have felt it, & having felt it once will feel it always. The crime of the Invention of the Human Race—how much it has to answer for!

You have written of Harte most felicitously—most generously, too, & yet at the same time truly; for he *was* all you have said, & although he was more & worse, there is no occasion to remember it & I am often ashamed of myself for doing it. I have had a curious experience. In the bound Blackwood for 1871 I was reading that mag.'s discovery of Harte, & its surprise & admiration over the Luck of Roaring Camp, which it reproduced substantially in full. There stood his birth! & I was carried back to it; then the next night came your funeral services over him, in which you brought him in a princely progress across the applauding continent, young & dapper & brown-haired; & by & by laid him to rest, white-headed & half-forgotten, in an alien land. In the one night I saw him born; I saw him flit across the intervening day, as it were, & when night closed down again I saw him buried. It was wierd (sic) & impressive.

(Final paragraph and postscript omitted.)

Love to you!

Mark

1. Ed. Bernard DeVoto (New York, 1940), pp. 281-292.
2. The Portable Mark Twain (New York, 1946), pp. pp. 752-755.
3. For permission to publish selections from Mark Twain's letters I am indebted to the courtesy of William A. Jackson of the Houghton Library, Harvard University, and Henry Nash Smith, Literary Editor of the Mark Twain Estate.
4. See Bradford A. Booth, "Mark Twain's Comments on Bret Harte's Stories," *American Literature*, XXV, 492-495 (Jan., 1954). On the dating of Mark Twain's falling out with Harte see his letter to Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Jan. 28, 1871: "... Bret broke our long friendship a year ago without any cause or provocation that I am aware of." (Mark Twain's Letters, ed. Albert Bigelow Paine (New York, 1917) I, 183).
5. *Life in Letters of William Dean Howells*, ed. Mildred Howells (New York, 1928), I, 252.
6. *An Heiress of Red Dog and Other Tales* (London, 1879).
7. *A Tramp Abroad*, published March 13, 1880.

## "A No. 1 Ruse"

John Hinz

The hero of Mark Twain's sketch, "Riley—Newspaper Correspondent," has

a ready wit, a quickness and aptness at selecting and applying quotations, and a countenance that is solemn and as blank as the back side of a tombstone when he is delivering a particularly exasperating joke<sup>1</sup>.

He listens impassively to his landlady's tearful account, over the breakfast table, of the Negro servant woman who had been burned to death in a neighboring house the night before. After twenty-seven years of devoted service to the same family, she had fallen asleep over a red-hot stove at three o'clock in the morning and "was actually *roasted!* Not just frizzled up a bit, but literally roasted to a crisp. Poor faithful servant, how she *was* cooked!"<sup>2</sup> Such devotion deserves its monument, and what appropriate epitaph would Mr. Riley be good enough to suggest . . . ?

"Put it, *well done*, good and faithful servant," said Riley, and never smiled<sup>3</sup>.

The straight-faced outrageous witticism that puts an end to an interminable narrative is a staple of Mark Twain's humor. The Jumping Frog story is a classic example of this species and Edgar Branch has pointed out a related variety in Sam Clemens' first publication, "The Dandy Frightening the Squatter"<sup>4</sup>. The squatter's closing taunt serves "to tie up the story and to emphasize the comic reversal. The action is then rounded off with the last line," he comments. ". . . And all of the characters are properly placed, justice done to each"<sup>5</sup>.

But "Historical Exhibition—A No. 1 Ruse," which appeared several weeks later in the *Hannibal Journal*, Mr. Branch finds "disappointing." "A long diffuse tale," it tells how the Hannibal townspeople, Jim C—in particular, are swindled by Abram Curts and his exhibit, "Bonapart crossing the Rhine." For their money they see only part of a bone drawn across a (bacon) rind. There is "interminable bickering," but Abram

Curts seems to have overcome their objections, when Jim, after a moment's silence, slowly ejaculated the few, but significant words "Sold! — cheap-as-dirt!"

And striding out of the house he marched down the street in a profound fit of mental abstraction<sup>6</sup>.

"Jim makes no sensational recovery of prestige," Mr. Branch complains. "The expected reversal never occurs. The suspense is poorly maintained: long before Jim's climactic admission we knew he had been 'sold'."<sup>7</sup> Further, Twain's dialogue in the closing scene is "indiscriminate," and "the conclusion is inevitable that he was relying upon that public interest which relishes gossip and horseplay about local situations and characters"<sup>8</sup>. Mr. Branch then identifies the originals of Jim and Abram among Hannibal townspeople.

Now, "Historical Exhibition—A No. 1 Ruse" has its limits as a sketch and may be a failure altogether as a story, but hardly for its "clouded intention"<sup>9</sup>. Consider the provocation, the loss of face, the verbal trickery of "Bonapart crossing the Rhine," the vulgarity and delicious solemnity of frontier humor. Then *slowly ejaculate the few but significant words* "Sold! — cheap-as-dirt!"

Riley, the witty newspaper correspondent of Mark Twain's sketch, chafed under the necessity of regularly writing dull factual copy. His attempts to spice things up, however, were always carefully deleted by the editor. Though he sometimes was unable to resist writing a lively passage, he crossed it out later. "He would say, 'I had to write that or die; and I've got to scratch it out or starve. *They* wouldn't stand it, you know'."<sup>10</sup> Or understand it, either.

1. Mark Twain, "Riley—Newspaper Correspondent," *Sketches Old and New*, Stormfield Edition (New York, 1929), p. 180.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 181.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 182.

4. Edgar Branch, "The Literary Apprenticeship of Mark Twain (Urbana, 1950), pp. 7-10.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

8. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*, page 12.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

7. *Ibid.*

10. Twain, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

## POETRY PAGE

### VEILED MAIDEN

Maxwell Bodenheim

(Sent to the Journal shortly before the poet and his wife were murdered in 1954).

Your eyes are stars of beauty through a haze  
of smoke,  
Your lips a ruby chalice for a cigarette,  
Your face a cameo of exquisite design.  
Your Mona Lisa smile I shall not soon forget.  
But 'tis your soul I seek to find—and—fail!  
Nor can I all your inmost thoughts evoke.  
Are they like precious jewels buried deep?  
Your soul eludes me in the swirling smoke.

### HUCK AND JIM

Robert Dusenbery

The day Huck went into exile  
Dreams became his fleeing  
As flying before the flood  
He angled back toward being.

Jim lay there dark on moss  
A bed on the island home  
Counting the gain and loss  
In flight from Missouri town.

Huck reached Jim in the bush  
And fathered ideas of found;  
In dark they rafted the river  
And drifting together were bound.

And the boy was bound to the man  
And the man was bound to the youth  
As eddies in rivers command  
The essential vortex of truth.

### COURAGE

Elsie Halsey Lacy

Fearless the spider crept  
Into the King's bed room  
While he quietly slept  
It busily wove its web,  
The Servant swept the corner  
Tore its web down with his broom  
It wove it back the next day,  
Defiant though was the King  
It had come there to stay  
In the King's own bed room.

### REMINISCENCE

D. M. Pettinella

O lonely summers when I wandered through  
the woods  
Searching a shady path, where with the  
breeze I might commune,  
Exchanging sighs with breaths of wind  
In intimate confessions.

I was away from everyone, alone,  
No passion stirred my heart.  
No friend was waiting for me  
I had no dead to mourn, no souls to pray  
for me.

The wind was in the trees and in my hair.  
I shut my eyes to feel it touch my cheek  
As if it were the hand of my lost mother  
Inviting me to sleep.

### LITTLE MAN

John S. Young, M.D.

Little man think big thoughts,  
Think you of tomorrow;  
Little man think big thoughts  
But you may come to sorrow.

Little man do your best  
Or do the best you can,  
Or else you will forever be  
Just a little man.

### WATCH YOUR SPEED

Herbert Seaforth

"I can drive my car at ninety per,  
In darkness or in light,"

He said.

Now his wife can tell you where he is,  
Every single night,

He's dead.

### THE HAPPY COBBLER

Alice Hoey Shaffer

The traveler watched the cobbler mend his  
glove,  
"Why gay?" he asked, "the world is push  
and shove,"  
"I have a job I love," the cobbler said,  
"I have a home I love, a God I love."

## Mark Twain Laughs at Death

(Continued from page 5)

1. Quoted by Minnie M. Brashear in "Mark Twain Juvenalia," *American Literature*, II (March, 1930) 49.
2. Note, for example, Mark Twain's serious obituaries of Anson Burlingame, Samuel E. Moffett, and the several elegiac pieces in prose and verse on his daughter, Jean.
3. An excellent survey of this literary trend in England is to be found in Eleanor M. Sickles, *The Gloomy Egoist: Moods and Themes of Melancholy from Gray to Keats* (1932).
4. Walter Blair, "Burlesque in Nineteenth-Century American Humor," *American Literature*, II (Nov. 1930), 247.
5. John Phoenix (George H. Derby) *Phoenixiana* (New York, 1856), p. 131.
6. Authorized Edition (New York, 1924), I, 130.
7. Sam Clemens of Hannibal (Boston, 1952), pp. 116-117.
8. Mark Twain at Work (Cambridge, Mass., 1942), p. 102.
9. Mark Twain, *A Biography* (New York and London, 1912), I, 98.
10. Mark Twain's Speeches (New York and London, 1910), p. 265.
11. *The Love Letters of Mark Twain*, ed. Dixon Wecter (New York, 1949), pp. 95-96.
12. For Twain's "Post-Mortem Poetry," see *The Complete Works of Mark Twain* (Authorized Edition), XVIII, 307-314; and for "Amended Obituaries," see *Complete Works*, XVIII, 292-295.
13. *Ibid.*, IX, 142.
14. XLVIII, 716-717. The article is alluded to in an unpublished letter from W. D. Howells to Mark Twain dated April 25, 1880. (Ms. in Mark Twain Papers, University of California Library). Mark Twain's only other contribution to the "Contributors' Club" was a rambling article on grammar and usage, also published anonymously. See the *Atlantic Monthly*, XLV (June, 1880), 849-852.

## The Man Who Could Never Die

(Continued from page 8)

An article: "Who Was Martin Eden?" published in the *Scandinavian American*, Seattle, Washington, December, 1954, page three, column two.

\*By-line: Anders Kruskopf.

The obituary of Martin Eden that appeared in the Tuesday, June 1, 1943 issue of the *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*.

Death certificates of Martin Eden issued by the Sonoma County Health Department, Santa Rosa, California.

Death notice of Martin Eden in the *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*.

Affidavit (photostat) signed by Anders Kruskopf, seaman-journalist who, according to Mr. Richard Kerr, of The Old Crow Historical Bureau—the organization that supplied me with all of the above material—is now preparing a biography of the original Martin Eden.

## MARK TWAIN IN HARTFORD

Mabel F. E. Berry

I knew Mark Twain personally. He married a Langdon from our First Presbyterian Church and many times I have seen them sitting on the left side of the center aisle.

My father, F. A. Ellis, was the publisher of a Prohibition paper in Elmira. Once he printed stationery for Mark Twain. I asked father if I could deliver it.

I rode my wheel as far as I could make it going up East Hill. Then I walked on to his house. They sent me to the cabin.

He said, "You didn't have to deliver that, way up here, Miss Ellis."

"I wanted to see where you worked!"

"Writing isn't work," replied Mr. Clemens.

He kept on typing while I watched.

"You can lay the package there on the table. Your father always does perfect work."

"Most people pay him for perfect work," I said.

Then he laughed, reached into his pocket, took out his wallet, and paid me.

It was only a few weeks later that I was riding my wheel home when I saw him with his rig standing in front of the Park Church. He motioned to me. I went over across the road.

"Will you do something for me?"

"What?"

"Take a message in there to my wife."

"If you will watch my wheel. What do you want me to say?"

"Tell her, that as usual, I am waiting out in front."

I parked my wheel against the famous elm and went into the social room. There were women there from the Hedding Church as well as the Presbyterian, and Park. They were packing a missionary barrel. Max Eastman's mother rubbed her hand over the top and said,

"There is just room for one more coat."

"Don't tell Thomas. He has only one decent one left," Mrs. Beecher said. Then I found Mrs. Clemens and gave her the message.





## Slack Towns Laughs at Death

(Continued from page 1)

1. *Slack Towns* by Arthur H. Thomas in "Slack Towns Journal," November 1920, p. 10.
2. *Slack Towns* by Arthur H. Thomas in "Slack Towns Journal," November 1920, p. 10.
3. *Slack Towns* by Arthur H. Thomas in "Slack Towns Journal," November 1920, p. 10.
4. *Slack Towns* by Arthur H. Thomas in "Slack Towns Journal," November 1920, p. 10.
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13. *Slack Towns* by Arthur H. Thomas in "Slack Towns Journal," November 1920, p. 10.
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## The Man Who Could Never Die

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1. *The Man Who Could Never Die* by Arthur H. Thomas in "Slack Towns Journal," November 1920, p. 10.
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## Slack Towns in Hartford

By A. E. Berry

I have been there personally. He was a laughing stock for that Presbyterian Church and when I have seen them sitting in the pews of the same church.

My father, J. A. Berry, was the goldfisher of a Presbyterian church in Hartford. Once he passed away, the church was left in a state of confusion.

I remember it well as I could see it going on from the time I walked in to the house. They were in the night.

On the 10th of the month, I was in the night, and I was in the night.

"I was in the night, and I was in the night."

"Waiting for the night, and I was in the night."

"I was in the night, and I was in the night."

"I was in the night, and I was in the night."

"I was in the night, and I was in the night."

"I was in the night, and I was in the night."

"I was in the night, and I was in the night."

"I was in the night, and I was in the night."

"I was in the night, and I was in the night."

"I was in the night, and I was in the night."

"I was in the night, and I was in the night."

"I was in the night, and I was in the night."

"I was in the night, and I was in the night."

"I was in the night, and I was in the night."

"I was in the night, and I was in the night."

"I was in the night, and I was in the night."

